BRANCHING OUT

NOVA SCOTIA News from Department of Education Public Schools Branch

At the end of a career in public education that has spanned the better part of four decades, I leave happy in the knowledge the public education in this province is moving forward. In order to support a culture of continuous improvement, we need a vision that has ALL students as the focus; that has professional teachers willing to rethink the way we do things based on data, research and promising practice; that has leadership at all levels having the courage and conviction to champion change. From my vantage point - the ingredients are there.

I am truly grateful for having had the opportunity to be a part of this wonderful journey - PUBLIC EDUCATION.

- Mike Sweeney, Senior Executive Driector Public Schools Branch, Nova Scotia Department of Education

Dr. Alan Lowe appointed Senior Executive Director, Public Schools

Dr. Lowe taught for many years in the Halifax school system and rose to the top levels of administration at the province's largest school board. He held several key positions with the Halifax Regional School Board, including executive director of corporate services, acting superintendent, coordinator of labour relations and coordinator of human resources services.

Dr. Lowe joined the Department of Education in 2002 as Regional Education Officer, serving as the department's liaison for the Halifax, South Shore and Annapolis Valley regional school boards..

Copyright and the Education Media Library

Use of videotaped materials in classrooms is governed in Canada by the *Copyright Act* which stipulates that programs must have a Public Performance License in order to be used in a classroom or educational setting. The Education Media Library in Learning Resources and Technology Services has a collection of curriculum-related programs with public performance rights. The catalogue is searchable online at http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca (click on Media Library > Online Catalogue). Lists of new acquisitions can be found under Media Library >Order > Dubbing > Pre-made titles.

More information about copyright can be found under Media library>Copyright. For more information, please visit our website: http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca or call (902)424-2440

Duke of Edinburgh's Award Young Canadians Challenge

Congratulations to the 24 junior and senior high schools that offer their students the opportunity to participate in this outstanding award program for youth aged 14–25.

Five new school groups with a total of 61 participants have begun the program in the past year—Duncan MacMillan High School and Five Bridges Junior High School, Halifax Regional School Board; Northeast Kings Education Centre, Annapolis Valley Regional School Board; St. Mary's Academy, Strait Regional School Board; and Uniacke District School, Chignecto-Central Regional School Board.

A total of 104 new participants entered the program in existing school groups at Prince Arthur Junior High (36), Halifax West High School (11), Annapolis West Education Centre (3), Eastern Passage Education Centre (1), École du Carrefour (9), Holy Angels High School (20), Oxford School (14), and Pine Ridge Middle School (10).

For information on the program, visit http://dukeofed.org/ns, email dukeofed@sportnovascotia.ca, or phone 902-425-5454 (ext.329).

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Back issues are available at http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca/branching.shtml
If you wish to receive the newsletter, please send an email to lrt@ednet.ns.ca.

News in Arts Education

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is partnering with the Department of Education to celebrate two exciting arts events. The art gallery is planning to exhibit selected works from the deGarthe Scholarship submissions in the Newman Daughters Gallery. The award winner will be announced at a special ceremony in conjunction with the celebration event of Advanced Music 12 and Advanced Visual Arts 12. Students, parents, and teachers of these pilot courses will gather on May 24 and 25 for two days of meetings, workshops, recitals, and displays.

Summer Institute workshops will be offered in all arts disciplines—dance, drama, music, and visual arts. Teachers are encouraged to check the Department of Education website at http://www.ednet.ns.ca/ to find out more about these fantastic professional development opportunities.

Newest "Let's Talk About..." Pamphlets from Learning Resources and Technology Services

The newest pamphlets in the "Let's Talk About..." series focus on classroom integration of information and communication technology in each Key Stage. Copies of the pamphlets are being sent to schools via school board staff. These pamphlets are an excellent resource for teachers and parents.

Online Resources for Integrating Information and Communications Technology

ICT Integrated Lessons are available online at http:// lrt.ednet.ns.ca./PD/ict_projects. These lessons were prepared by teachers around the province and include rubrics for evaluation, blackline masters, and all materials required to address the curriculum outcomes and ICT outcomes identified.

Gaelic Language: Program Grants for School Boards

The Department of Education, English Program Services, is pleased to announce special program grants for school boards wishing to provide students with opportunities to learn the Gaelic language.

The study of the Gaelic language provides students with opportunities to interact with the Gaelic community and to deepen their knowledge of a shared heritage, traditionally passed down "o ghlùin gu glùin." It promotes positive attitudes toward cultural diversity and commonality and fosters students' appreciation for Nova Scotia's diverse heritage and way of life. Knowledge of one's culture and heritage engenders a sense of security, confidence, and self-worth and provides a sense of place and belonging.

School boards are invited to complete an application form describing plans to promote Gaelic language acquisition within the school system grades 3–12 or outside of the instructional day primary–12. For projects beginning in the fall of 2007, applications are to be received by June 30, 2007. For programs beginning in winter/spring of 2008, applications are to be received by November 1, 2007.

Program grants may be used for hiring Gaelic language teachers, providing professional development opportunities, and purchasing teaching and learning resources. For details and an application form, please contact Mary Fedorchuk, Program Co-ordinator P–12, English Program Services, Department of Education at (902) 424-5436 or e-mail fedorcm@gov.ns.ca.

New Course to be Offered September 2008 –English 12: African Heritage

English 12: African Heritage is designed to prepare students to achieve the same specific curriculum outcomes as for English 12. Students in English 12: African Heritage will write the English 12 NSE. The new course will be piloted in 2007 and implemented in September 2008.

Information sessions were held in March and April 2007. Information about the course can be found by going to www.ednet.ns.ca and selecting curriculum related web sites under Educators>Classroom and Curriculum Resources.

May is Asian Heritage Month

Model Legislature 2007

The fifth annual Nova Scotia Model Legislature is slated for May 25–27, 2007. Once again, 52 high school students from across the province, along with teachers and parents, will gather at Province House in Halifax. Participants will have the opportunity to meet with politicians, debate topical issues, and attend workshops. If you have students who are interested in attending, or if you are interested in participating as a teacher, email Bruce Fisher, Social Studies Consultant, at fisherbh@gov.ns.ca.

New Programs and Formats available from the Education Media Library

We are making the transition from VHS to DVD! The Media Library now offers some programs on DVD. Older programs will still be available only on VHS, but new acquisitions will be offered in both formats. When you are placing your order, please specify which format you would prefer. If no format is specified, dubbing resources will be sent on DVD. For more information, please call the Media Library at (902)424-2440.

The Essence of Coaching
April 19–20, 2007

One hundred and fifteen teachers gathered at the Old Orchard Inn on April 19 and 20 to focus on honing their skills as Literacy and Math coaches. Activities included looking at Lesson Study as a means to support the improvement of instruction through the coaching process; clarification of the distinction to be made among consulting, collaborating, and coaching; spending some time with specific issues related to math and literacy; networking; and looking at new resources. On the second day, Lucy West, a well known researcher and supporter of coaching and co-author of *Content-Based Coaching: Transforming Mathematics Lessons*, spent the day with the teachers solidifying their understanding of coaching.

writers in Action

Writers in Action 9
May 16–18, 2007

Over 100 teachers from across the province will participate in a Writers in Action 9 implementation workshop May 16–18, 2007 in Wolfville. Several local and international speakers will be lending their expertise to this event. Penny Kittle, author of *The Greatest Catch... a Life in Teaching*, will spend a full day with teachers looking at the Writing Workshop and presenting a variety of scenarios and approaches to offering writers engaging and inspiring ways to become proficient in writing skills. Also, local experts Lynne Healy, a speech language pathologist from Acadia University, Ian McNeil, former host of *Information Morning* in Cape Breton, and Sylvia Gunnery, well known author of novels for elementary and young adolescent readers, will share their expertise. Schools will receive Writers in Action 9 resources for teachers and classroom writing centres in the fall.

Teaching in Action: Grades 4–6
May 24–25, 2007

The launch of the newest teaching resource to support implementation of English language arts curriculum will take place in Dartmouth May 24–25, 2007. *Teaching in Action: Grades 4–6* will be the focal point for a two day session involving close to 100 teachers. Featured speaker and well known Canadian researcher and Literacy Consultant, Miriam Trehearne, will provide a keynote identifying the most current research and state-of-the-art practices in literacy for students in grades 4–6. Miriam, together with many Nova Scotian teachers, will provide workshops around Reading and Writing Workshop illuminating some of the vignettes described in the new resource.

Many new resources have been distributed to schools recently in support of a focus on grades 4–6. These include *Comprehensive Literacy Resource for Grades 3–6* with senior author Miriam Trehearne, *Units of Study for Writing in Grades 3–5*, a resource by Lucy Calkins, and *Reading Expeditions: Reading and Writing Workshop—Springboard Level*, a resource by National Geographic, specifically focussing on non-fiction text for students in grades 3–8.

May is Gaelic Heritage Month

A Question of Influence Curriculum Supplement: A Teacher's Drug Education Resource

The Department of Education's and the Department of Health Promotion and Protection's collaboration on the development of a drug education curriculum supplement has culminated in the production of ***A Question of Influence,*** a resource that has recently been distributed to all Health/Personal Development and Relationships 7–9 teachers (English program). ***A Question of Influence*** was extensively researched and is based on current best practice knowledge in school-based alcohol and other drug education. Its official launch is slated for Bedford Junior High on Thursday, May 17, at 1:30 pm.

This curriculum supplement supersedes ***Making a Difference*** (1994). An interactive website will be live on EDnet in the upcoming months with an online tutorial for teachers. Questions and comments about this curriculum supplement can be directed to: DrugEducation@gov.ns.ca

New Curriculum: Physical Education 10

New Physical Education 10 curriculum will be introduced for the 2007–08 school year. It will comprise five modules: a 10-hour module on healthy living (addressing topics such as healthy sexuality, mental and emotional health, substance use, and addictions) and four modules of 25 hours each—Outdoor Pursuits, Leadership, Personal Fitness, and Exercise Science. Schools can expect to receive the draft implementation guide before the end of this school year and are encouraged to introduce aspects of the curriculum next year, with full implementation in 2008–09.

New Resources to Support Active, Healthy Living

A number of new resources have been listed in *Authorized Learning Resources* for Health Education Primary–6 and Health/Personal Development and Relationships 7–9. These address a wide range of topics such as healthy eating, healthy sexuality, global citizenship, safety and injury prevention, physical activity, mental health, substance use, family, and healthy relationships.

New professional resources for the physical education curriculum, grades primary–12, focus on the movement categories—basic movement, active living, dance, educational gymnastics, alternative environments/outdoor activities, and skill development/sports experience.

Science

Expert Shows Teachers The Ins of Outer Space

Participants at the Science 5 and Science 6 Implementation Workshop studying new elementary science curriculum learned about the ins of outer space from a truly out-of-this-world expert.

Dr. Alain Berenstain, director of space exploration for the Canadian Space Agency, gave an engaging talk about space exploration to Mars on May 2. The Department of Education partnered with the Canadian Space Agency to make Dr. Berenstain's presentation part of the Science 5 and Science 6 Implementation Workshop held at the Old Orchard Inn, May 2 to May 4, 2007.

Public Schools Branch consists of the following Divisions:

African Canadian Services	902-424-3151	acsd@ednet.ns.ca	http://acs.ednet.ns.ca
English Program Services	902-424-8945	eps@ednet.ns.ca	http://eps.ednet.ns.ca
Education Quality Services	902-424-0040		
Evaluation Services	902-424-7746	testeval@ednet.ns.ca	http://plans.ednet.ns.ca
French Second Language Program Services	902-424-6646	fls@ednet.ns.ca	
Learning Resources and Technology Services	902-424-2462	lrt@ednet.ns.ca	http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca
Student Services	902-424-7454	studentsvcs@ednet.ns.ca	
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Regional Education Services	902-424-5799	(Halifax - SSRSB, HRSB)	902-424-6097 (Halifax - CSAP)
	902-563-2080	(Sydney - CBVRSB)	
	902-893-5890	(Truro - CCRSB, SRSB)	
	902-742-3427	(Yarmouth - TCRSB, AVRSB)	

Nova Scotia Department of Education website: http://ednet.ns.ca